

What is the Tekla Festival?

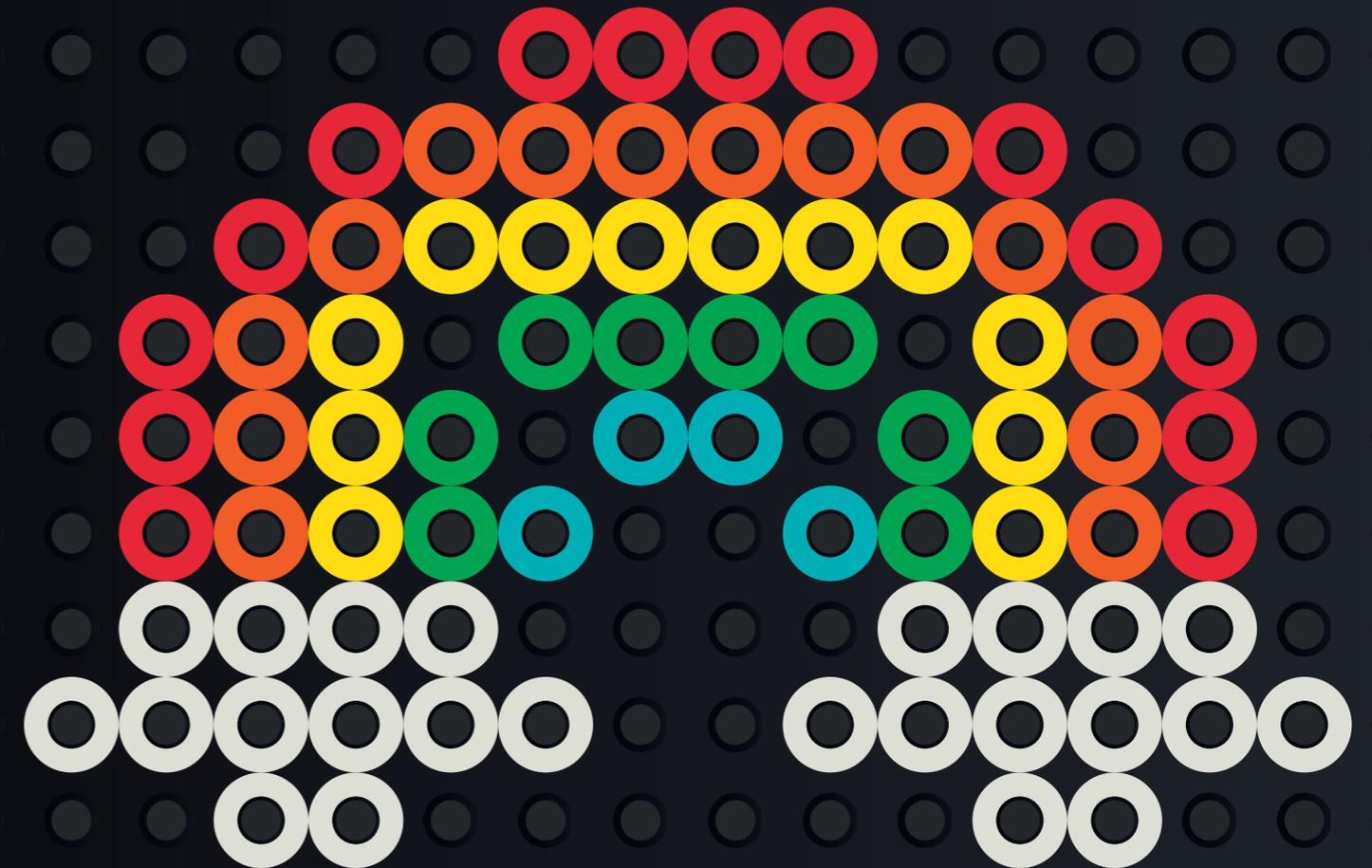
Tekla isn't a girls' tech festival. It's simply a tech festival that invites girls. Boys are not invited because boys do not need a tech festival the way girls do. And when boys leave the room, girls tend to fill the space in ways they usually do not.

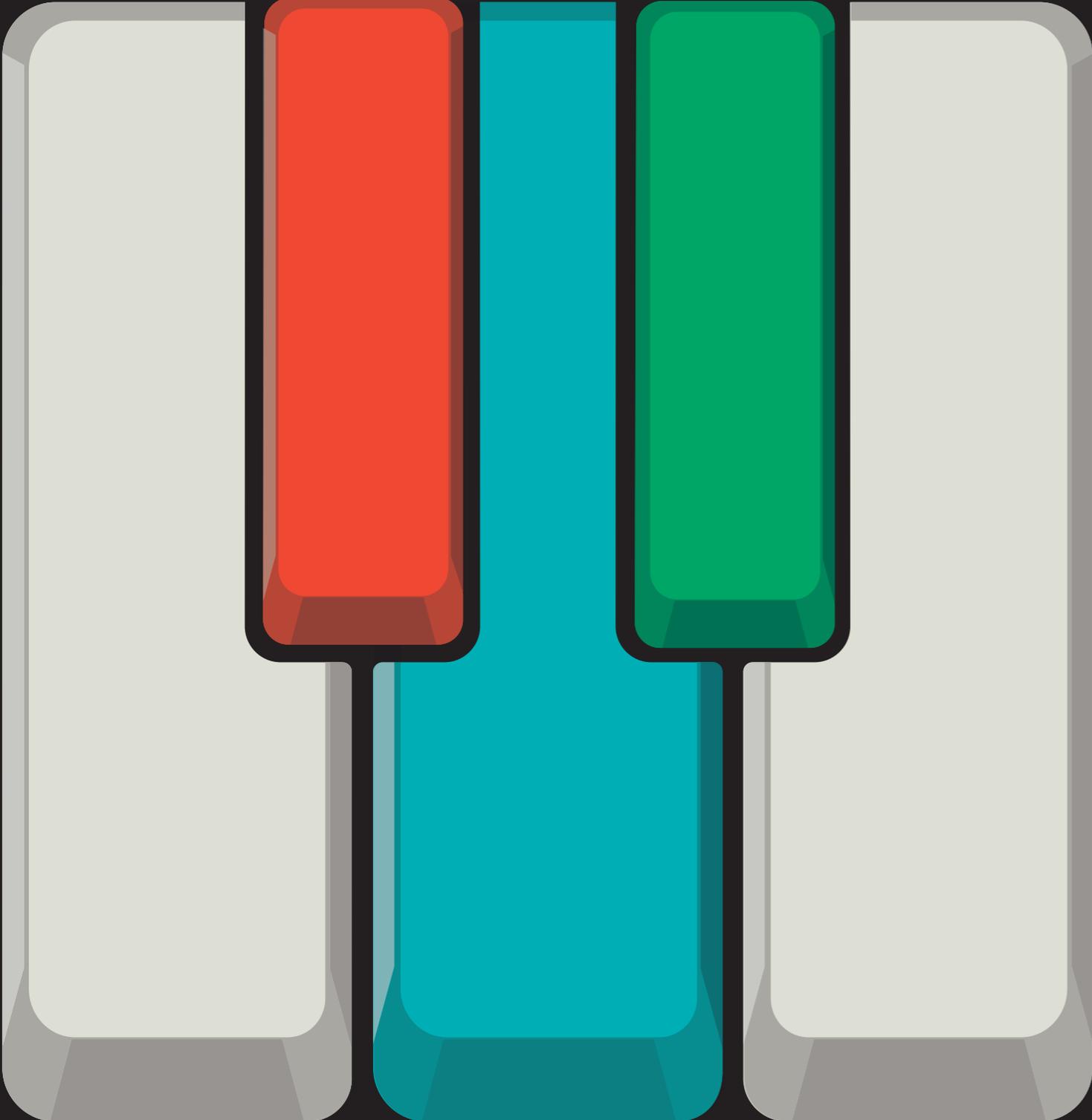
The gender gap represents lost opportunities for millions of women and a global waste of talent. Even tech-savvy Sweden struggles to engage women in technology. Tekla is an investment in the future – a key piece of outreach to girls aged 11–15 years. Encouraging their early interest in technology cuts a path toward strengthening society.

There are many pedagogical initiatives in Sweden that build a foundation for an interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects at an early stage. Tekla is a complement to these, by providing a festive and creative environment where girls can take on different roles and build their self-confidence in relation to technology.

Female role models inspire the girls during the event, which reinforces the perspectives they gain during the hands-on workshops.

The Swedish Institute collaborates with KTH Royal Institute of Technology and Swedish Embassies and Consulates around the world in the international version of the Tekla project.





The history of Tekla Festival

The Tekla Festival originated after Swedish recording artist Robyn was awarded KTH's Great Prize in 2013, which honours *'a person who, through epoch-making discoveries and the creation of new values and by ingenious applications of findings gained on the practical aspects of life, promotes Sweden's continued material progress.'*

Award winners are required to lead a seminar at the university, and Robyn wanted to use this platform to inspire girls who might be intrigued about technology – an industry historically dominated by men. The first Tekla Festival was attended by 200 girls. Since then Tekla has been a yearly event at KTH, attracting around 300 young girls to explore technology together in a safe and fun space.

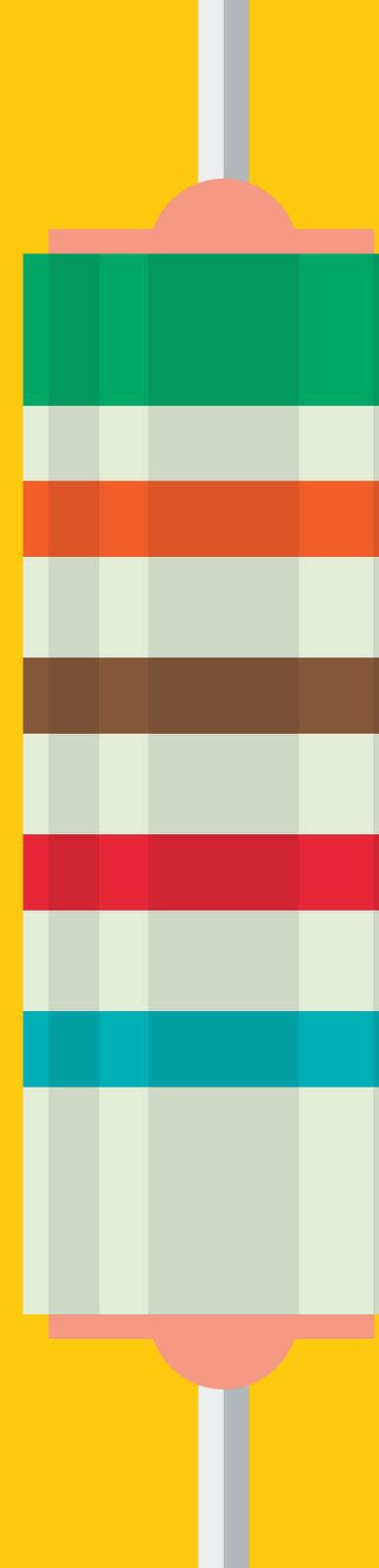
Tekla Festival goes international

In 2019 the Tekla Festival left the university grounds to go on tour in order to inspire even more girls to explore the world of STEM. In a partnership between the Swedish Institute (SI), KTH and Swedish Embassies and Consulates, Tekla has visited several countries around the world in order to spread Tekla's mission even further.

The international project includes Tekla Workshops as well as Tekla Dialogue, a moderated conversation that focuses on gender equality, women in tech and the importance of increased diversity and inclusion in the STEM sector. The project will now be made available to all the Swedish embassies in order to inspire and empower even more girls around the world and put more focus on this important topic.

Sweden has long been ranked as one of the most creative and innovative countries in the world, with tributes for its contributions to music and technology. The collaboration between SI and KTH has resulted in material used by Swedish Embassies in order create dialogue and discussion on music tech, innovation, STEM and gender equality.

It's a platform for discussions about girls' education and women in STEM – addressing the problem of underrepresentation of women in technology and ways of empowering girls and women by strengthening roles and opportunities.



The Swedish Institute (SI) is a public agency that promotes interest and trust in Sweden around the world. They work in the fields of culture, education, science and business to strengthen international relations and development. SI is building lasting relations between Sweden and other countries in order to increase interest in Sweden. To this end, they share information, develop skills, promote cultural exchange and cooperation, and provide funding and grants. SI is supporting and collaborating with businesses, universities, cultural institutions and Swedish embassies around the world.

Since its founding in 1827, **KTH Royal Institute of Technology** in Stockholm has grown to become one of Europe's leading technical and engineering universities, as well as a key center of intellectual talent and innovation. We are Sweden's largest technical research and learning institution and home to students, researchers and faculty from around the world dedicated to advancing knowledge. KTH is addressing some of humanity's greatest challenges with research and education in natural sciences and all branches of engineering, as well as in architecture, industrial management, urban planning, history and philosophy.

